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RSC CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION INTO USING TAXPAYER FUNDED EARMARKS FOR POLITICAL BENEFIT

CBC Chairwoman Acknowledges the Truth About Earmarks

“...could significantly assist a few members in highly contested races.”

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jeb Hensarling (R-TX), Chairman of the Republican Study Committee, called for an immediate suspension of the earmarking process after learning that a prominent House Democrat suggested to the Speaker of the House that the procurement of additional earmarks could help assist the campaigns of vulnerable Democrats.

The morning after House Democrats forced a 3500 plus page spending bill containing 692 pages of more than 9000 earmarks, *The Politico* Newspaper reported that last week, Congressional Black Caucus Chairwoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick (D-MI) sent a letter to Speaker Pelosi that discussed the unfair distribution of earmarks. Citing a need to speak with Speaker Pelosi on “matters of extreme urgency,” Congresswoman Kilpatrick noted the unequal distribution of earmarks.

“In her letter, she singled out the unequal awarding of earmarks. A recent analysis of earmarks by Congressional Quarterly showed that white members received on average twice the funding that African-American lawmakers received for requests made by a single person. Last week USA Today ran an article on earmarks that listed some of the top recipients of funding for pet projects. Not a single black lawmaker appeared on the list.” ([The Politico, 12/18/2007](#))

In the letter, Congresswoman Kilpatrick made clear that a more favorable distribution of taxpayer earmarks would directly help vulnerable members of the Congressional Black Caucus get elected.

...But she still hoped that more earmarks would be doled out to black lawmakers who have competitive reelection contests. ([Politico, 12/18/2007](#)) ***“Inherently, we understand that this earmark process is not equitable... There are a few examples of where your help could significantly assist a few members in highly contested races.”*** ([Rep. Kilpatrick letter to Speaker Pelosi, 12/13/2007](#))

Despite Speaker Pelosi's campaign [pledge](#) to "make this the most honest, ethical, and open Congress in history," Democrats produced a massive spending bill that contained nearly 700 pages of 9,000 plus earmarks (over three hundred of which were air dropped into the bill without any measure of accountability).

Earlier this year, the [Wall Street Journal reported](#) that Congressman John Murtha, the powerful Democrat appropriator, had "rebuilt [his] hometown on earmarks," noting that "Johnstown's good fortune has come at the expense of taxpayers everywhere else."

RSC Chairman Hensarling's Statement:

"Conservatives have said for some time earmarking process has lent itself to the triumph of seniority over merit, secrecy over transparency, and the special interest over the national interest – and that has now been confirmed by a vocal leader in the Democrat House Caucus.

"The suggestion that taxpayer funded earmarks should be used to 'assist members in highly contested races' should be enough to warrant an investigation into the distribution of earmarks. Never has it been more clear that Congress must suspend the earmarking process until some sort of integrity is restored."

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The Republican Study Committee consists of over 100 conservative Republican members of the House of Representatives.